



THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

April 12, 2004

MEMORANDUM TO: Secretarial Offices  
Heads of Operating Administrations  
Bureau of Transportation Statistics Director

FROM: Norman Y. Mineta *nym*

SUBJECT: Safety, Health and Return-to-Employment (SHARE) Initiative

In a January 9 memorandum, President Bush established a new workplace safety and health initiative called Safety, Health and Return-to-Employment (SHARE). The memorandum identifies four main goals for fiscal years (FY) 2004-2006, directs executive branch departments and agencies to participate in the initiative, and directs the Secretary of Labor to lead the initiative for the Federal Government and provide annual progress reports to the President.

Workers' compensation losses throughout the Federal Government are more than \$2 billion and 2 million lost production days annually. In FY 2003, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) reported 1,905 workplace injuries, \$94 million in workers' compensation costs, and Departmental costs of \$3 million dollars for continuation-of-pay. This initiative will also improve productivity, responsiveness, and quality of service to the taxpayers.

The Department has established the following annual goals which were identified by the Department of Labor (DOL) as reasonable targets for the Government as a whole to accomplish:

- 3% per year reduction in total case rates for injuries and illnesses per year;
- 3% reduction in case rates for lost time injuries and illnesses per year;
- 5% improvement of the timeliness of filing notices of injury and illness per year; and
- 1% reduction in the rates of lost production days due to injuries and illnesses per year.

Progress in each of the goal areas will be measured against our FY 2003 baseline year.

In support of SHARE, the Heads of Operating Administrations and other elements shall be responsible for:

- adopting and achieving the Departmental goals as indicated above; and
- reporting annually on the progress made in achieving the goals

The Department's Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO) will lead the initiative and monitor DOT's performance. The DASHO will report the Department's progress to DOL for the annual report to the President.

I share the President's commitment to improve workplace safety and health and to reduce the costs of injuries to workers and taxpayers. We can do more to eliminate unsafe working conditions and encourage employees to perform their jobs safely and effectively to remain injury free. I encourage you to give this important safety initiative your full support and attention.

For more information on this initiative please have your safety or workers compensation representative contact Mr. Richard L. Holdcraft, Departmental Occupational Safety and Health Manager, at (202) 366-5995; or Stephen Gomez, Departmental Program Manager for Workers' Compensation Programs, at (202) 366-9455.

Attachments

## Safety, Health, and Return-to-Employment (SHARE) Initiative

### BACKGROUND

President Bush signed this safe workplace initiative on January 9, 2004. **SHARE** was established to encourage government agencies to do more to improve workplace safety and health and reduce the costs of injury to workers and taxpayers. The time frame for **SHARE** is three years, FY2004-2006. The lead for **SHARE** is the Department of Labor which set minimum goals for the initiative. DoT then adopted the same goals for its Operating Administrations.

The 4 goals of the **SHARE** initiative are:

1. Reduce total workplace injury and illness case rates by 3% per year.
2. Reduce lost-time injury and illness case rates by 3% per year.
3. Increase timely filing of workers' compensation (OWCP) claims by 5% per year.
4. Reduce the rate of lost production days due to injury by 1% each year.

The baseline for measuring these goals is the 2003 rates. Current FAA performance on these goals:

1. We had 1,545 new workers' compensation claims filed in FY03. With 49,477 employees our injury rate was 3.12. The all-government rate was 4.19.
2. Our FY03 rate for lost-time injuries and illnesses was 2.09. The all-government rate was 1.93.
3. FAA performance on timeliness of filing was 52%. The all-government rate (excluding the USPS) was 49.6 %
4. We are still unable to measure lost production days internally and have no FAA baseline numbers; however, Department of Labor is measuring DoT performance in this area. In FY2003, DoT had 36.7 lost production days per 100 employees, and all-government rate (excluding USPS) was 56.0.

As FAA moves more towards performance as a business-based organization, we can compare our rates with those of private industry. For instance, DuPont's lost-time rate for 1999 was 0.23 with 200 cases and 85,000 employees, while Johnson & Johnson's rate for 2002 was 0.09 with 58 cases and 63,000 employees.

Success in meeting the **SHARE** goals will require preventive actions and close management of injuries. For each goal, the FAA should explore financial and recognition incentives to make sure they support the goal, rather than detract from it<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The Department of Treasury's Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) implemented a gainsharing program in which they rewarded employees for bureau-wide performance in the following elements: efficiency, quality, and safety. In the area of safety, BEP established 1) percentage reduction of lost time

Another recommended action is the formation of a task force to study the Agency's stress-related claims and determine how they can be prevented. Our recommendation to the task force is to review the number of traumatic mental stress claims in relation to the operational errors that occur, and to have strong management involvement in analyzing and following up on stress claims.

### PLAN OF ACTION

As appropriate, each Line of Business and Staff Office will designate a staff support organization to assist managers and supervisors in discharging their responsibilities for maintaining a safe and healthful workplace, preventing employee injuries, and following up when injuries do occur.

*GOALS 1 and 2- Lower total workplace injury and illness case rates by 3% per year from FY2004 through FY2006 and lower lost-time workplace injury and illness case rates by 3% per year from FY2004 through FY2006*

Supervisors and managers are key to prevention of workplace injuries. They and their support staff should:

- Ensure that employees are trained in safety precautions appropriate for their assigned tasks
- Ensure that periodic safety inspections of the workplace are conducted and that hazards found are corrected
- Enforce safety rules and regulations and require the use of personal protective equipment as necessary
- Hold employees accountable for actions that violate safe work practices
- Investigate all workplace accidents
- Report all work-related injuries and illnesses in the Safety Management Information System (SMIS) by providing accurate and up-to-date information regarding the injury details and number of workdays lost.

All employees should:

- Demonstrate safe work habits
- Report and correct safety hazards in the workplace
- Follow safety rules and regulations and use personal protective equipment as necessary
- Report all work-related injuries and illnesses

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injuries from previous year and 2) percentage reduction of COP paid during previous year as the performance measures. In a given year, when the bureau-wide goals are reached, employees were awarded a pre-established monetary sum in gainsharing checks. The financial incentive of this program has served as a catalyst for BEP managers and union officials to work together to eliminate workplace injuries and return employees to duty.

GOAL 3 *Increase timely reporting of injuries and illnesses by 5% per year.*

- FY 2003 baseline: 52% timeliness rate
- FY 2004 goal: **54.6%**<sup>2</sup>

To support this 5% rate of improvement, supervisors and their staff support office will:

- Submit all claim forms to their servicing HRMD within three workdays of the date the injured employee submitted the claim form

GOAL 4 *Reduce lost days resulting from work injuries and illnesses by 1% per year.*

To support this goal, supervisors and their staff support office will:

- Submit all CA-1 and CA-2 claim forms to servicing HRMD within 3 workdays of receipt from injured worker
- Contact HRMD OWCP specialist upon receipt of any questionable claim to discuss whether the claim should be challenged.
- Terminate continuation of pay in traumatic injury claims with disability when prima facie medical documentation supporting disability from employment is not received within 10 days from date of injury
- Contact disabled employee on a regular recurring basis (weekly or bi-weekly, as appropriate) to determine prognosis for recovery and to determine if employee is capable of returning to duty
- Modify employee's position or offer a temporary alternate position that meets employee's work capacity, where employee has some work capacity but not at full duty, until return to full duty is appropriate

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<sup>2</sup>  $(.05 \times 52) = 2.6 + 52 = 54.6$